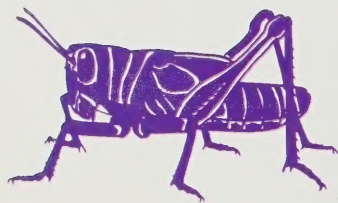


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CONTROLLING PESTICIDES IN ONTARIO



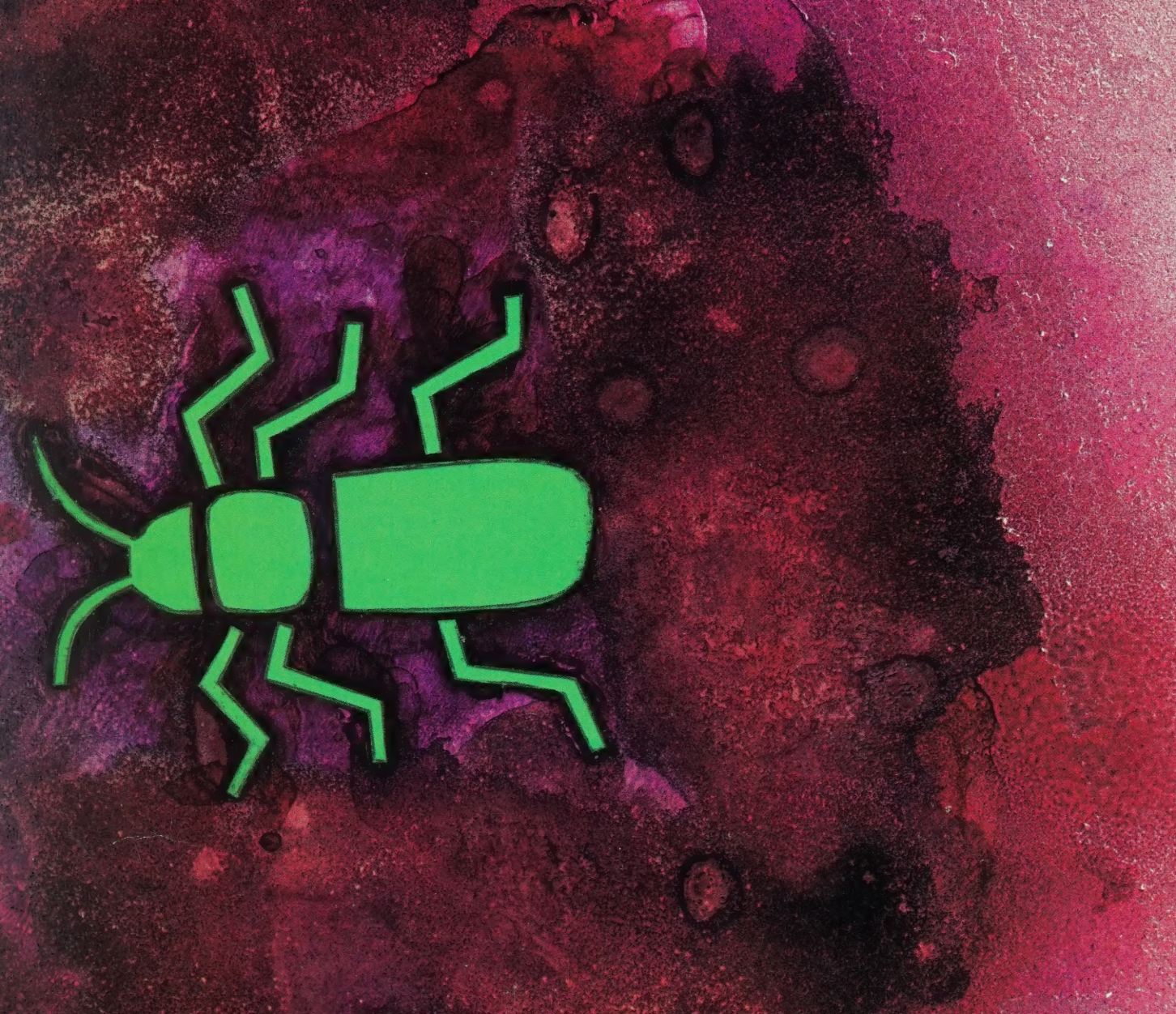
WHY PESTICIDES ?

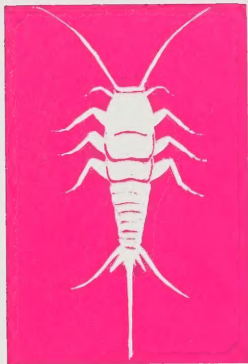
The word “pesticides” describes a wide variety of chemical substances and compounds employed to control rodent and insect populations. In addition to these rodenticides and insecticides, this term also takes in fungicides which control fungus, miticides that work on mites, herbicides that control weed growth, and other similar products that affect individual pests.

Pesticides play a vital part in the economy of Ontario. While keeping farm crops healthy, they also maintain the economic health of the province’s agricultural industry and other businesses related to or dependent on agriculture.

Without these products, the quality, quantity, and variety of foods we enjoy would be drastically limited. It has been estimated that Ontario would lose 40 to 80% of its apple production within three years if such products weren’t employed to control the codling moth. And this is just one of the many species held in check by pesticides. Without herbicides, farmers would lose up to half their crops, overrun and choked out by rapid weed growth.

The fact that we in Ontario have experienced no major outbreaks of vector — (organism) borne diseases has been attributed in part to pesticides controlling their carriers. Using historical hindsight, experts theorize that modern rodent control techniques could have checked the notorious Black Death plagues that decimated Europe and Asia.





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WHY PESTICIDES CONTROL?

Pesticides, if used properly, perform an invaluable service for modern man. Problems arise when these substances are abused . . . when stronger chemicals are employed than are necessary to do the job . . . when pesticides are used in amounts greater than necessary . . . when accidents occur in the transportation or application of pesticides.

Ontario is fortunate to have never suffered an environmental crisis caused by the mishandling of pesticides. The results of carelessness or negligence when handling these substances have been thoroughly documented. Incidents of such disasters have been reported in many areas of the world.

Like the uses of nuclear energy, application of pesticides has a good and a bad side. Their effects on our environment are entirely dependent on how they are handled.



HOW IT'S DONE



In Ontario pesticide use is governed by the provincial Pesticides Act and regulations. This provides for the licensing of all commercial exterminators and applicators in various classes according to duties performed. These licensed professionals are required to carry insurance to cover liability in case of accident. Under the Act, a director is responsible for issuing these licenses; he has the power to revoke or suspend licences when the occasion warrants.

Under the Act, extermination is divided into two sectors — land use and structural use (in and around buildings). At present, there are 14 classes of licence for land extermination, and six classes for structural.

The Act also makes provision for a fine of up to \$2,000 or a prison term of up to three months, or both of these, on conviction for any violation of the Act and its regulations.

In addition, the Environmental Protection Act (1971) restricts the sale of pesticides by licensed vendors to licensed users. This is coupled to a classification system that divides all pesticide products into one of four categories. Those substances in A class, the most restricted, must be carefully kept track of; outlets selling these must be licensed and keep complete sales records. Many A compounds are available only on a specific use permit.



WHO DOES IT?

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, through its Pesticides Control Service, administers the Pesticides Act. This Service is divided into four sectors: Head Office Administration, Education, Licensing, Examination and Prosecution, and Field Services.

The Head Office Administration section controls purchasing, budgeting and financial matters and sets internal policy in pesticides control. This section maintains a uniformity of enforcement across the province.

The Education section supplies information and trains applicants for licensing examinations. This section also produces brochures for government, industry and public consumption, and continually researches and reports on new technical developments in the field.

The Licensing, Examination and Prosecution section is responsible for examining all candidates for licences to ensure they know all about the areas covered by their licence. Under the Pesticides Act, examiners from related industries are appointed to conduct these tests. Those representing municipal or provincial government agencies are also required to pass these tests. Between 800 and 900 of these examinations are conducted each year by this section.



The Field Services personnel are responsible for the day-to-day enforcement and administration of the Pesticides Act and regulations in their own regions. This section divides the province into 6 regions with headquarters in London, Hamilton, Toronto, Belleville, North Bay, and the newest addition in Thunder Bay. These operators make inspections and check for violations of the Act, such as the use of pesticides by unlicensed people.

The Pesticides Act also incorporates a Pesticides Licence Review Board. This service as a court of appeal for anyone who has been refused a licence, or who has had his licence suspended or revoked.

In addition, under the Act, there is a Pesticides Advisory Committee, made up of a chairman and thirteen members. This committee, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, makes an annual review of the content and operation of the Act and regulations. It then suggests to the Minister of the Environment any changes or amendments it feels to be necessary.

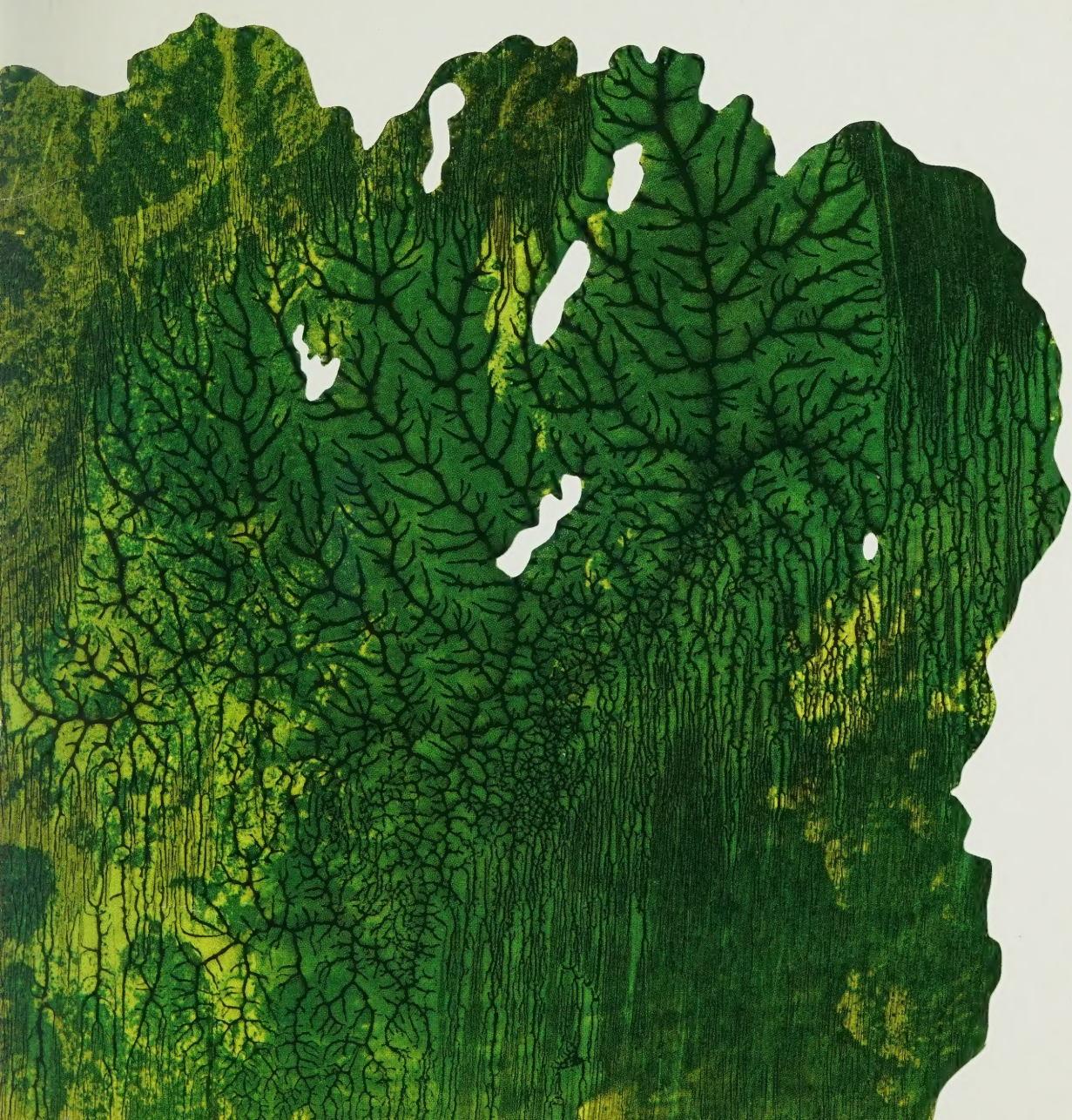
The pesticides classification system was originally brought forward in one of this Committee's reports. The Pesticides Advisory Committee has the power to look into any matter concerning substances used for extermination that might affect the environment and public health or safety.

WHAT'S AHEAD

Keeping up with new developments in the field of pesticides is a full-time job and one that is vitally important. Progress in monitoring and scientific research updates our information about these chemicals and their methods of application.

Should any compound pose a threat to our environment, the Government of Ontario can quickly take preventive steps. A case in point, the chlorinated hydrocarbons aldrin, dieldrin and heptachlor were completely restricted in January 1970. In addition, DDT was phased out of agricultural use as of that date.

It is the aim of the Ontario government to provide safer pesticide products and to prevent their mis-use by inexperienced people. Under present economic conditions we cannot afford to discontinue the use of these products. Since they must be used, they must be used wisely. The Ministry of the Environment, through the Pesticides Control Service, will continue its efforts to safeguard the quality of life in Ontario by the controlled use of pesticides.





Ontario

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